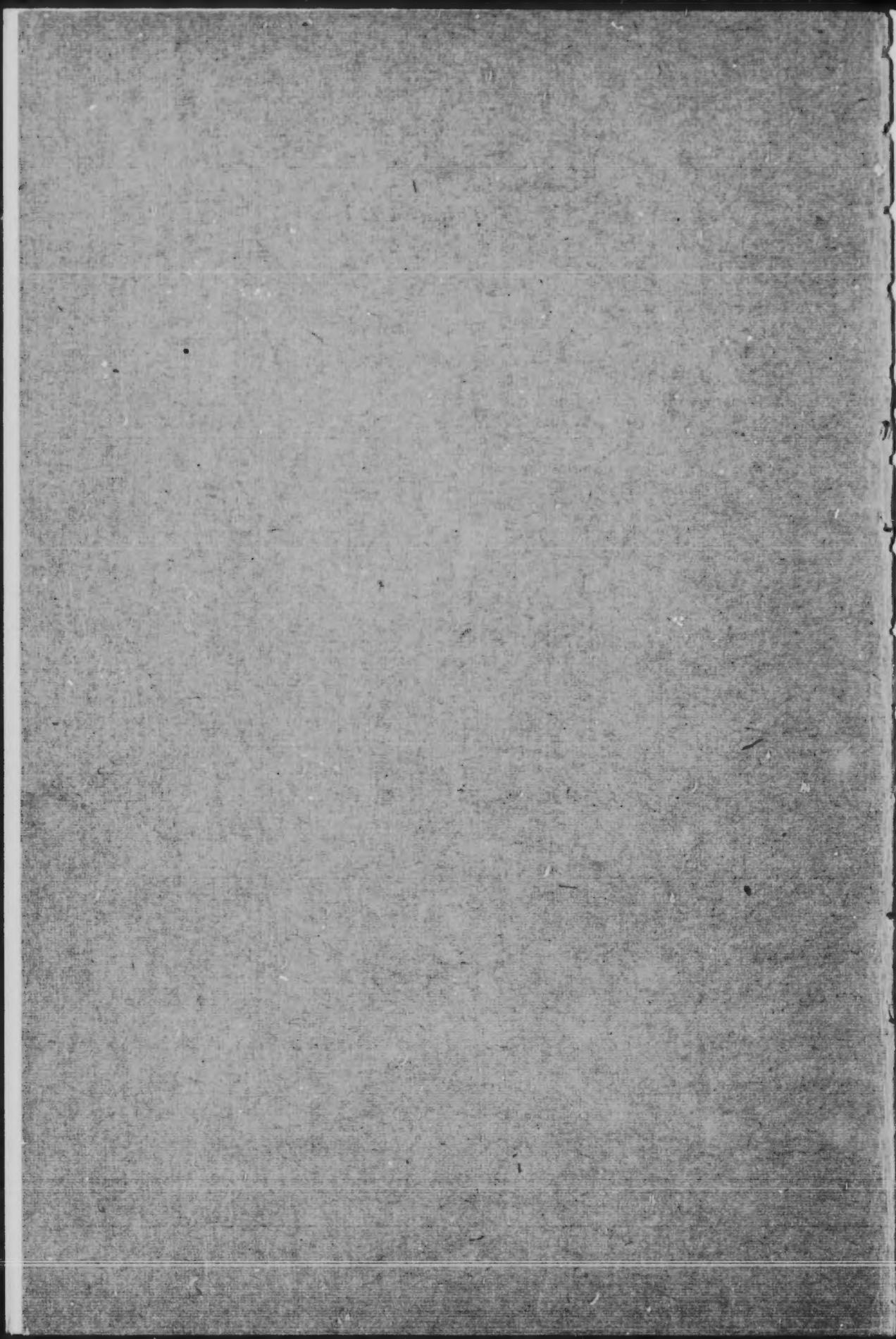


THE STORY
OF THE
KING GEORGE
AND
QUEEN MARY
MAPLE LEAF
CLUB

1915
TO
1919





THE STORY OF
THE KING GEORGE AND QUEEN MARY
MAPLE LEAF CLUB.



Their Majesties the King and Queen visiting the Maple Leaf Club.

THE STORY OF THE KING GEORGE AND QUEEN MARY MAPLE LEAF CLUB.

LONDON : 1915-1919.

BY
MARY MACLEOD MOORE.

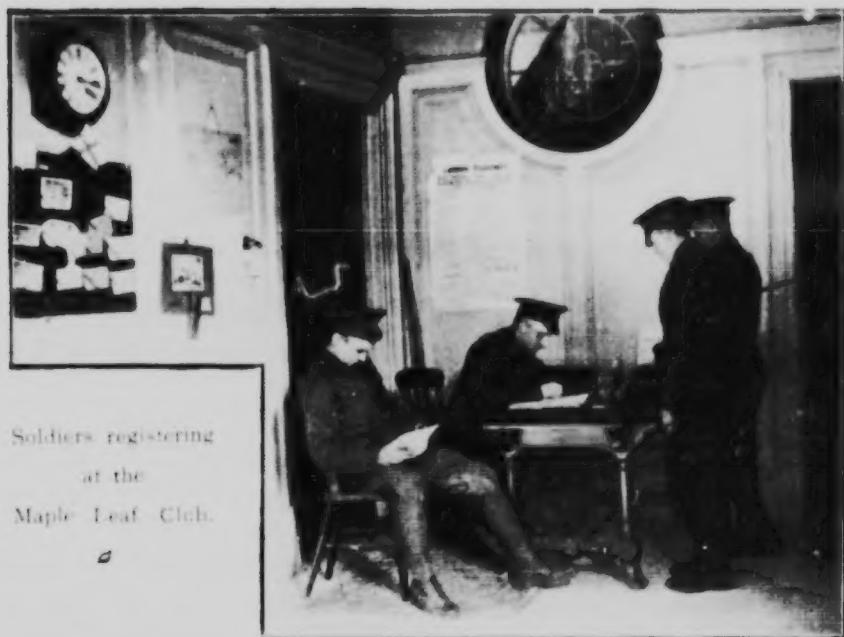
*"Our children give themselves that we may live
Unhurt behind the thunder of the guns,
Is it so great a thing that we should give
A little from our store to serve our sons?"*

KIPLING.



NOTE.—The title, "Maple Leaf Club," is used in the singular as meaning a corporate body, and in the plural when referring to the buildings.

5
C2
M6



Soldiers registering
at the
Maple Leaf Club.

THE Maple Leaf Clubs were the first residential Clubs established in London for Overseas soldiers.

The need for such hostels or Clubs was especially forced on the attention of those who, through the medium of the Canadian Red Cross or otherwise, made it their endeavour to get into touch with our soldiers individually, and who as personal friends of the man in hospital came so soon to know of his wants and wishes.

The Information Bureau, Canadian Red Cross, is identified with the name of Lady Drummond. To her came frequent enquiries as to where our soldiers might stay when on leave either from Hospital, the Front, or Camp. Hotels were crowded, expensive, and in any case unsuitable, private lodgings inadequate, scattered and lonely. At the hotel where Lady Drummond was then staying special emergency provision was made on more than one occasion, through her representations, for Canadian soldiers from the Front, who otherwise would have slept or sat, as they said, on the Embankment.

Not only from the men, but from the O.C.'s and Matrons of Hospitals came enquiries as to whether there was any centre where Canadian soldiers might gather together in their furlough and feel themselves at home.

"Several of the Canadians who have passed through the hospital are being discharged on sick furlough without any friends to go to," wrote the O.C. of a great hospital in London. "This seems to me to be an opportunity for gratifying the many expressed desires on the part of enthusiastic ladies to arrange for kindly and suitable hospitality during furlough."

To those who knew, it was a matter which could no longer wait. Resolve was taken, and the co-operation sought of several interested and

sympathetic friends—Lady Perley, Mr. Robert Lindsay, Mr. G. G. Stuart (late of Quebec)—and the fact that enquiry and search were being made for a house suitable for a residential club for soldiers was mentioned—not altogether without intention—to English friends.

In a few days Lady Salisbury called to offer a house as a free gift for the purpose. A cable was then sent to Mr. Huntly Drummond, Montreal, which stated the "crying need"; also that the Marquis of Salisbury had offered one of his London houses, that Mr. G. S. Stuart, then on his way to Canada on legal business, would return to take charge, that about \$5,000 was required to make a start, that the men would pay half cost of maintenance and that \$2,000 was already subscribed, of which Sir Thomas Shaughnessy, then visiting England, had contributed half, and this message closed succinctly with the words, "Can rest be assured? You can publish this if thought well. Julia Drummond."

This message was put into one of the leading papers with a further word from Mr. Drummond to make it clear that what was wanted was a Club and not a Convalescent Home. In a very short time \$8,485 was reported as in hand. The kind offer from Lord and Lady Salisbury had been followed by another most generous offer of a house, from the Hon. Mrs. Ronald Greville, and as this house, 11, Charles Street, Berkeley Square, was the larger of the two it was thought best to accept it. It may be said now that not only did Mrs. Greville give her house, but from first to last she took an untiring personal interest in the work.

It was just at this stage that Lady Drummond had a message from Mr. Rudyard Kipling, who was at the same hotel, that he would very much like to see her. Mr. Kipling said to her that he was feeling terribly concerned about the lack of suitable accommodation for Canadian soldiers when they came out of hospital; that many whom he had visited had said to him that they actually dreaded their leave, for they had nowhere to spend it. Mr. Kipling said he was so troubled about it that he had made up his mind that very day to approach Lord Milner on the subject knowing his interest in Canada and Canadians.

Lady Drummond told Mr. Kipling that a Club was already assured, that it could make no better start than under the patronage of Earl Grey, Lord Milner and himself, and that Mrs. Kipling's help would be invaluable on the Committee which was about to be formed. Mr. and Mrs. Kipling went off at once to see the house and ever after were warm supporters of the movement. Mrs. Kipling consented to be Chairman of the Committee, acting as such for more than three years, and Mr. Kipling visited the men and talked to them in his own delightful nimitable way.

Although the Maple Leaf Club, inaugurated August 4th, 1915, was, as has been stated, the first residential Club for Overseas soldiers, the Victoria League had some weeks previously started an important social centre for the men of the Overseas Forces, where meals could be had at a reasonable figure, and recreation was provided for all the men who cared to make use of the rooms. The Maple Leaf Club had not long



BROWNS HOTEL.

LONDON W

(DOVER ST & ALBEMARLE ST)

Aug 11. 1915

Dear Lady Duranond

I enclose herewith

cheque for £100 for the
Maple Leaf Club: and my
very best wishes for its

success. Sincerely

Rudyard Kipling

Facsimile letter from Mr. Rudyard Kipling, one of the original patrons of the Club.

been in existence when it was followed by two other residential Clubs for Overseas Forces, the Victoria League Club, and Peel House. Miss Talbot, then Secretary of the Victoria League, and the Hon. Mrs. Graham Murray, to whose initiative the Peel House was largely due, were already on the Committee of the Maple Leaf Club.

It was a matter for gratification that Their Majesties the King and Queen honoured all these Clubs with the Royal name so that the distinctive title of each had the prefix, "The King George and Queen Mary." His Majesty asked especially that, so far as possible, the Clubs should receive all Overseas soldiers who applied for admittance, and suggested also that there should be a small joint Committee of the three

Clubs as ensuring co-operation. As a result, although each Club had an independent Committee, all three were represented at a joint conference which met at the Colonial Office, when questions arose which were common to all.

No appeal was made for the necessary financial aid except in Canada, but the Maple Leaf Club had throughout strong friends and supporters in the British Isles, some of whom subscribed generously. There was no warmer friend to Canada, as we know, than the late Earl Grey, who when asked to become a Patron of the Club wired to Lady Drummond: "My name always at your disposal. I know it is safe in your hands. Accept with pleasure. Grey."

The Club at 11, Charles Street, was formally opened by Sir Robert Borden, Premier of Canada, on August 4th, 1915, the first anniversary of the outbreak of war. Writing a few days earlier to Lady Drummond, Sir Robert said:



Photo Campbell Gray.

A game being in the Reading room at 11, Charles Street, Berkeley Square, W.



Photo Campbell Gray

The Billiard Room at 11, Charles Street, Berkeley Square, W.
Canadian pictures are hanging on the walls.

"You do not need to be informed that the purpose commands my entire sympathy, and that I esteem it a privilege to be present at the opening. It should prove most useful, and, indeed, valuable to the Canadian soldiers on furlough and particularly to those on sick furlough. The splendid work which you and other Canadian ladies are doing in many spheres of activity for the solace of our Canadian troops is appreciated most deeply by all Canadian people."

This first Club had a capacity of 60 beds increased to 110, but the demand soon far outgrew the supply and many times the original number of beds could have been occupied. Through all the camps and out to the trenches news went of this Club in one of the great houses of London, where a man could find not only good food and a warm bed, but a hot bath, a change of underclothing, a dressing gown and easy slippers!

Nay more, his underwear was washed and if necessary sterilised, his uniform was cleaned and his rifle and other equipment stored until wanted. For this accommodation he paid about 3/- daily - 72 cents—until rising prices necessitated some increase in charge.

So much for material comfort, the like of which sounded like a fairy story to the men in the rain and mud of Flanders. There was also the question of amusement and society. The Clubs supplied both. The Lounge with its easy chairs and big fireplace was always filled with friendly men ready to exchange news and experiences, or perhaps only drowsing, and the billiard-room was another cheerful centre while the charming dining room, in which beaux and belles of another century once posed and coquettled, had perhaps never heard more entertaining.



Photo Campli, C.W.

A corner of the Canteen at 11, Charles Street, Berkeley Square, W.

Lady Drummond and Miss Timmis standing.

racy conversation than that of the men of a new land seeing London with keen observant eyes

In the recreation room, games, books, and a piano kept many a man even from some much talked of "show," and enthusiastic letters home were written from this cheery centre of Canadian life in London

In a copy of *The Dad Horse Canteen Gazette*, for June 1916, (official Journal of the First Canadian Infantry Brigade, "A trench Journal of Breezy Comment"), there appears an interesting reference to the Club. "This," says D.H.C.G., "is a residential club for Canadian N.C.O.'s and men. It is, as explained in a letter received from the Hon. Comptroller, not a 'graft,' but is maintained by the private subscriptions of prominent Canadians at home and abroad. The staff is made up of wounded First Division men. The main trouble, so some of the boys who have been on leave in London tell us, is that the Club is always full up. That in itself seems a good testimonial."

The popularity of the pioneer club made it necessary that more accommodation should be provided for the Canadians trooping up to town from the Camps and from across the Channel. As a result of the generosity of the people of Canada, and especially of the various Chapters of the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire, more houses were taken, and in March and April 1916, the I.O.D.E. Annexes were opened in Connaught Place, Marble Arch

So crowded, however, did even these Clubs shortly become that it was decided to try for further branches in the vicinity of Victoria Station, where the leave trains arrived and whence they departed. In June 1916,

Lady Drummond again abled to Canada as follows

"Can approximately \$25,000 be raised throughout Canada to provide more King George and Queen Mary Maple Leaf Clubs for soldiers on leave? Such Clubs are more than necessary to their comfort. They are an urgent necessity."

The response to this call was, as ever, most liberal, and special and wonderful help was also forthcoming that summer from the Government of Ontario, whose Premier, Sir William Hearst, had heard much of the Clubs from the late Lieut. Colonel Richard Reid, then Agent-General for that Province, and who made a point of visiting them when in England in August. As a consequence, in October and November 1916, accommodation was very largely increased through the addition of Nos. 29, 31, and 33, Elizabeth Street, and Nos. 18 and 20, Grosvenor Gardens, S.W., the rental and equipment of these houses being entirely met by a generous contribution from the Ontario Government.

The new Clubs were formally opened on December 21st, 1916, by Field Marshall H R H, the Duke of Connaught, who spoke in the highest terms of the work thus done for the men from trench, plain, camp or hospital.

"We must recognise," said His Royal Highness, "that, after all, in this sad war there is a very human side."

It was one of the first opportunities Canadians in London had had to greet the Duke upon his return from Canada and the audience appreciated Lady Drummond's reference to the fact; her announcement that the men were indebted for these new branches to the Ontario Government and to Sir William Hearst, as well as to Colonel Reid, was greeted with applause. Colonel Richard Reid, Agent-General for Ontario, was shortly afterwards elected a member of the Committee, which position he held until the time of his death, being succeeded by Brig-General R. Manley Sims, C.M.G., D.S.O., when he became Agent-General for Ontario. To these two gentlemen much is due for their untiring efforts on behalf of the Clubs.

In speaking of the need Lady Drummond told a touching story. On one occasion Earl Grey visiting a Soldiers' Club found a man bent double beside his bed. His first thought was that the man was praying, but on observing him more closely he found that the soldier had sunk down on the floor prostrate from exhaustion. Hearing this one can well understand the feelings of the man who wrote home

"I stayed at the Maple Leaf while in London: the meals, which were excellent, cost 3.6 per day and bed was one bob. Beds include clean sheets, pyjamas and a bathrobe. Golly! It was unalloyed pleasure just to get into bed and feel the sheets and pyjamas! It must be simply heaven to some of those chaps who come back from France. Two of them came in one day with packs, rifles and tin pots all complete - mud included. I wish you could have seen the look of utter bliss which settled on their faces when they hit those beds!"

In March 1918, Nos. 13, 15 and 17, as well as 14 and 16, Grosvenor Gardens, were acquired through the continued generosity of the Ontario



Photo W. D. Downey, Ltd.
The Maple Leaf Clubs in Grosvenor Gardens, S.W.

Government. Some of these houses were on the south side of the Gardens in the same terrace as the offices of the United States Navy; some were on the north side. In order to meet the exigencies of the American Navy it was arranged that the Clubs should all be in the terrace on the North side, the U.S.N. covering the costs incident to removal.

Between these two handsome blocks of modern Victorian houses there is a beautiful square. A special request was made to the Office of Works that this Square should be lent to the Maple Leaf Clubs for the erection of a large Hut to be used as a centre for meals and recreation and also that this Hut should be built under Government direction at a cost to be named by the Club. This was granted and by Christmas 1918 a spacious and beautifully proportioned Hut was thrown open to the men for the above purposes, and the adjacent Clubs were then entirely released for sleeping accommodation.

It was well that these arrangements were already under way when the Armistice was signed on the 11th November, 1918, as this was the signal



Photo W. D. Downey, Ltd.
The Hut in Grosvenor Gardens, S.W.

for the arrival of large numbers of Canadian soldiers on leave, and for months after hostilities had ceased the men poured into London from France, Belgium and Germany, as well as from the English camps where they were awaiting their return to Canada. Accommodation had to be found.

Confronted by this emergency a message was again sent to Canada, fortified by a cable from Mr. J. G. Colmer, C.M.G., in the name of the Canadian War Contingent Association, which suggested that half of the sum it had been intended to assign to that Association from the Canadian Red Cross Autumn Campaign in the Province of Quebec might be given to the Maple Leaf Club.

A cheque for £10,000 (\$50,000) was the reply, and this was shortly followed by one of £5,000 (\$25,000) from the Canadian War Contingent

Association of Manitoba, and another for £1,007, sent through the Canadian Bank of Commerce, in December 1918, collected through Mr. Angus Sinclair of Toronto.

Nothing remained now but to find the premises—no easy task in the extraordinarily congested state of London. The War Office, however, lent its aid and commandeered the large Swimming Bath, St. George's, Buckingham Palace Road, for the Club, planking it over with amazing speed, and turning it between a Saturday and a Monday into a comfortable dormitory which was especially popular with our men from the fact that it was steam heated.

The Club also took over 57, Eaton Place in the same neighbourhood and made it, too, a Ped Annex to the Maple Leaf Club. An offer came from Mr. Wade, Agent General for British Columbia, of an extensive floor in the handsome British Columbia Building in Regent Street. This was furnished by the Maple Leaf Club and supervised by Mrs. Chrimes, daughter of Mr. Wade.



Their Majesties
received at the
Club by mem-
bers of the
Canadian

The last extension made was the King George and Queen Mary Maple Leaf Hut at King's Cross Station. This was not for beds, but for Canteen, Rest Room and Kit Storage, for soldiers travelling to and from Scotland and the North of England. The urgent need for this had been pointed out to the Club by Colonel Birks, C.Y.M.C.A., and a joint arrangement was made, the Club paying all costs of building and equipment, and the C.Y.M.C.A., undertaking management and maintenance. Some idea may be had of the need met by this Hut from the fact that in the month of March 1919 alone, 30,893 meals were supplied there, 2,681 men were given information and assistance, and 11,200 kits were checked and stored.

The total Club accommodation at this date extended to fourteen houses and two huts

The grand total of beds occupied by men on leave, from August 1915, until the Clubs closed down in the late summer of 1919, was 565,830. The total number of meals served was 1,052,891

By far the greater proportion of the men actually housed at the Clubs were Canadians, but at the big central hut for meals, in Grosvenor Gardens, the guests included (besides the Canadians), Australians, New Zealanders, South Africans, Newfoundlanders and men from the United States

The Manager of the Club has from time to time placed on record the assistance which he had placed at his disposal through the instrumentality of the G.O.C. London District, Major General Sir Geoffrey Fielding, K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., as "Q" London District on many occasions rendered help of the most cordial nature

Captain Daniell had at times been appealed to with a view to the provision of accommodation not infrequently at late hours of the night, or even the early morning, but never failed in providing the necessary quarters and likewise the very necessary mechanical transport to enable the Canadian soldiers to proceed there with as little fatigue to themselves as possible. This help, it must be understood was only applied for after every corner of each branch of the Club in London had been so fully occupied as to preclude the taking in of any more of our men. Captain Daniell himself visited the Club, on being invited to do so by the Manager, at 1 or 2 o'clock in the morning, for the purpose of lending that support to the dispatch of the lorries which secured their rapidly



Page 111
Entertaining the Boys in Town at the Marine Hotel
at night, Piccadilly, May 1918

moving off to their destinations, discharging their passengers and returning to take others to the various soldiers' hostels under the supervision of the London Command. Canada may well feel satisfied that her noble contributions to the Club were turned to the best advantage for her splendid men.

Special thanks are due to Mr. Huntly Drummond of Montreal, also to Mr. Angus Sinclair of Toronto, who collected large sums for the Clubs. Generous donations also came direct from the Canadian Clubs of Hamilton and Vancouver and from other Societies, and not a few gave beds in memoriam.

In addition to money contributions, numerous articles were given for equipment by the Canadian War Contingent Association and the Canadian Red Cross Society.

Organisation and Management.

At each Club there was an officer in charge, invalided from active service, with whom were associated sergeants and orderlies, none of whom was in Category "A." Over both officers and other ranks there was, until the retirement of Captain Watson, who had to return to Canada in the autumn of 1918, an Honorary Comptroller who was responsible for efficiency and discipline, and to whom each officer in charge was accountable for the management of his branch. All officers were resident in their Clubs. The orderlies registered the men on arrival, examined passes, received the money for bed and meals, attended to kits and issued clothing, besides performing other duties. The Clubs were open day and night and the orderlies were on duty on an average



Photo Camplin Gray, Ltd.

The dormitories were a pleasant change from the trenches.

to hours daily. It should be understood that all these officers and orderlies were in the pay of the Canadian Government, which in this way made a handsome contribution to the maintenance of the Clubs.

When Captain Watson retired a General Manager was substituted for a Military Comptroller. The Club was fortunate in securing for this position Lieut.-Colonel F. A. H. Elliott, D.S.O., late of the South African Permanent Force, who received his appointment and salary from the Club.

There was also a civilian staff in each house consisting largely of voluntary lady workers, some resident, others coming in shifts. "Daughters of the Empire" who happened to be in London assisted in this good work, and among other valued helpers were members of the British Columbia and Yukon Church Aid Society, an English organisation interested in those parts of the vast Dominion, who served for several years in the canteens of two of the Clubs.

Too much cannot be said of the services rendered by the Honorary Matrons, to whose unremitting and self-sacrificing labours and motherly care the success of the Clubs is largely due.

Much also is due to the Honorary Secretary who held that position from the inception of the Club until it closed down, and to the Honorary Treasurer, both of whom were constantly on duty at the central office of the Club, the former giving practically all his time to the work.

In writing of organisation a side of the work should have prominence which was of vast importance to the men. This was the arrangement



A party on the terrace of the Connaught Place Club. In the group are Lady Drumm and Mrs. Shaw, Miss Kibot, Mr. Robert Lindsay, Mr. W. O. Ryde and Captain Watson.

made for the cashing of leave cheques and the safe keeping of money on deposit. All men arriving from the Front had pay cheques ranging in value from £2 to £20. Owing to the irregular arrival of the trains and in order to prevent loss of time and consequent disappointment to the men, who often wished to continue their journey without the delay involved in waiting to get money from the Pay Office, Millbank, it was found desirable to cash cheques at the Club.

In February, 1916, the Paymaster-in-Chief, Canadians, was approached on the subject. A Paymaster was at once attached for duty, and during the four years of the work the value of the cheques thus cashed reached the astonishing figure of £1,818,984 (\$3,840,252).

It was obviously unwise for a soldier in London to carry about large sums of money on his person, and the officials of the Club urged the men on arrival to deposit their money and their valuables for safe keeping before they sallied forth. The men took full advantage of this; they got an official receipt for their money and could draw small sums as required.



Left: New Library in C

"I'll take one of mine now, please."

Every effort was made to persuade the men to draw only small amounts at a time and when, as might happen occasionally, a man who was a little "carried away" by the excitement of his leave came in to ask for more money it was generally found that the cashier was absent, or that for some similar reason his money could not be touched until the following day.

From first to last the Club cared for the sum of £561,820 (\$2,730,445) in deposit.

That so large sums of money were safely kept at the Clubs is an evidence both of the great care taken by those in charge, and of the trustworthy character of the vast majority of the men. There were bound to be some losses, and there were in fact one or two rather thrilling experiences with apparently expert burglars in khaki, some staying at the Club, others from outside, and the Club had to stand these losses for the men. But the wonder is that they were not much heavier.

What I have Seen.

None could visit these Clubs without feeling enthusiasm and gratitude that such a work was being carried on for the men who were so far from home. At any hour the sight was a cheering one, for there were always brown-faced vigorous men in khaki crowding the rooms and corridors and filling the tables in the canteens, laughing, talking, joking, whistling and bringing a breath of the clean, vitalising air of the Dominion into the heart of the British Empire.

Perhaps one realised the benefits of the Club most upon paying an evening visit when the staff was on the *qui vive* for fresh arrivals and waiting for the cars which had gone to meet the men coming on leave. Lights were burning brightly, great cauldrons steamed and simmered over hot fires, cooks stirred, and waitresses flitted in and out. Men in khaki sat and chatted over their dinners and others were busy brushing and smartening themselves before setting off to see a show. Orderlies were ready to enter names and to store kits, to show men to their beds and to indicate the whereabouts of the bathroom where the luxury of hot baths might be enjoyed upon arrival.



His Majesty enjoys a quiet moment. This is shared by Brig.-Gen. R. M. Simms, Lieut.-Col. Elliott and Mr. Pereevel K. C. S.

When at last the men came, so tired some of them that they could not have walked a step further, the smile that broke upon their faces was something never to forget. A part of a letter from one of them (afterwards killed) expresses how they all felt.

"More than just the comforts we get from this Club," he wrote, "is the feeling of thankfulness that comes from knowing that somebody cares enough about us except as fighting units to provide such quarters. It keeps us from feeling we are absolutely alone when we get to London, and a big city like this is pretty well calculated to instil loneliness into the cheeriest.... I saw one sergeant come in from France, loaded deck-high with equipment. He just made a bee-line for the beds, and it would have made your heart glad to hear the sigh of comfort when he lay down on something more comfortable than a foot of mud."

"That somebody cares for us"—in these words we get the secret of it all. It was the "mothering," the gentle courtesy of those who served, that so won the men far from home, who had been for some time on a life of active warfare with all that the words imply of hardship and privation.

One of the gentlest and most charming of the waitresses at the Clubs was the Princess Patricia, now Lady Patricia Ramsay, who (an authentic tale) sometimes got tips from the men she served, and with true Royal "act is said to have put them in her apron pocket!"



Their Majesties with H.R.H. Princess Mary, visiting the Hut in Gresynedd. Queen Mary, Lady Patricia and Prince George are to be seen in the group.

A story is also told—but this I am inclined to believe a fable, for the Princess in any disguise, was, as the men would say "hard to beat"—that she was waiting on a man just over from France and as she took his order for the second course, he somewhat shyly, for fear of hurting her feelings, asked if it would make any difference if he moved his seat to another table.

"Oh no," said the Princess, "but are your friends sitting there?"

"No, lady," was the reply, "but some of the boys say that Princess Patricia is going to help here to-night, and I'd love to be able to write home that I was waited on by Royalty."



Post News Letter (U.S.)

Hungry? Sure! Say I
hope you're cooking
some of the things
Mother used to make.

The daily routine at the Clubs was full of interest, and there was no need for the men on leave to suffer from dullness or monotony.

Breakfast was served from 7.30 until 9.30, and even 10, and one can well imagine the treat late breakfast was to many of the soldiers who made use of the Club. But even while the majority were sleeping others were starting off on their return to the Front. For these early birds special arrangements were made. The members of the C.E.F. staying at the Club and returning "off leave" were accommodated in certain rooms which permitted of their being roused early (not infrequently at 4 a.m., to catch the early morning train to Folkestone), without disturbing the tired sleepers.

At 10 a.m. Messrs. Thomas Cook & Sons called at the various branches of the Club, with a brake, to take out those who were desirous of visiting some of London's many famous historical places, such as The Tower, St. Paul's Cathedral and other interesting buildings. The tour was so arranged that those enjoying it were able to return to the Club by the

dinner hour, which began at six and stretched—a very long hour—to half-past eight. Many and many a time have the people hurrying through London streets paused to glance at the brake-load of cheery boys in khaki, and smiled as they heard the refrain of one of the popular songs of the moment, or even a hearty rendering of "The Maple Leaf Forever."

The Hut, which was a popular rendezvous, was open during the whole day and, in addition to providing refreshments, had a separate counter, where cigarettes, tobacco, chocolates, etc., could be purchased.

Once, and sometimes twice a week, the stage at the end of the Hut was occupied by companies engaged for the amusement of the men, and from time to time lantern lectures on Old London and other topics of interest to the Overseas men, many in England for the first time, were given. During the afternoons a competent pianist played popular selections, of which the men marked their approval by joining vociferously in the chorus.

In addition to these entertainments a weekly dance was held, a most popular form of amusement, to which all Overseas soldiers were invited, together with such girl friends as they felt they would like to introduce to their Club. It is something to record with satisfaction that in no single instance did anything transpire to mar the smoothness of the proceedings, which generally terminated at about midnight with the singing of The National Anthem.



Fig. 7. *Tea Party Scene*

Her Majesty Queen Alexandra, during a long and busy visit to the Crossbow Cafeteria Hut, is the picture shown. Seated K.R.C. Princess Victoria, Lady Mary, Lady Lillian and Lady Ferrey, and Mr. Ferrey, is seated.

Sir Charles Hedges,
(then) Lord Mayor of
London, visiting the
Connaught Club, Elizabeth
Street, S.W. —



Fig. 1. *Illustration*

The Manager of the Club also had placed at his disposal tickets for the various places of amusement which were given to those who cared to take advantage of this opportunity of spending a happy afternoon or evening free of charge.

For those who preferred to stay in the Clubs there were the billiard tables, which were at all times much appreciated and usually occupied until closing time—1 a.m.; while the Reading Rooms with their comfortable easy chairs, books, papers and magazines, provided a quieter form of recreation of which full advantage was taken.

Visitors.

The Club was honoured by visits from many distinguished persons. The first Royal visit was that of Their Majesties the King and Queen to the original Club, 11, Charles Street, February 20th, 1916, and on August 8th, of the same year, Her Majesty graciously visited Connaught Place, where she talked to some of the men in a most kind and friendly way and expressed her satisfaction with their surroundings.

On March 3rd, 1916, Her Royal Highness Princess Christian visited 11, Charles Street, and on 28th October of the same year Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Connaught with H.R.H. Princess Patricia, paid friendly visits to 11, Charles Street, and to 29, 31, 33, Elizabeth Street.

H.R.H. Princess Louise, Duchess of Argyll, visited the Clubs in Charles Street and in Elizabeth Street, on July 25th, 1917, and shewed a keen interest in the men and in the Clubs.

Their Majesties again honoured the Club by a visit to the Hut in Grosvenor Gardens on the 22nd April, 1918, when they were accompanied

by H.R.H. the Princess Mary, and on the 2nd July—almost a Dominion Day visit—H.M. Queen Alexandra accompanied by H.R.H. Princess Victoria, was a welcome guest at the hut. The Queen Mother paid the Club a pretty compliment in wearing a Maple Leaf badge, to which she called the attention of our men.

Field-Marshal Lord Kitchener, Earl Grey and Lord Milner were among the first visitors to it, Charles Street.

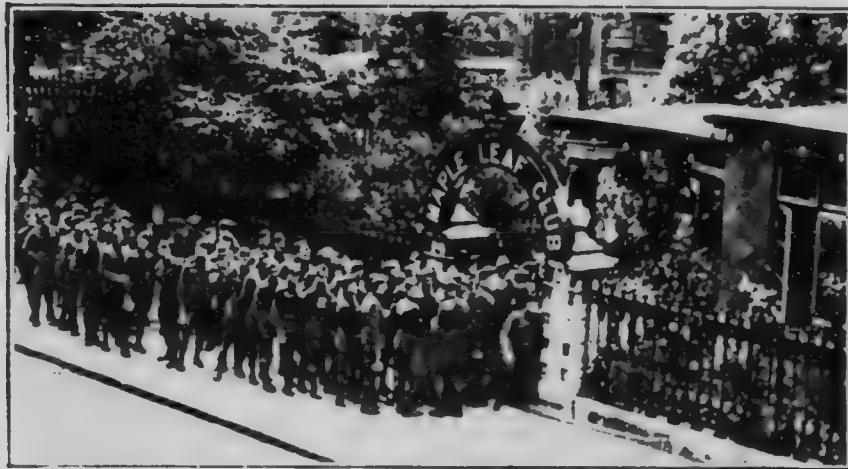
On the occasion of a later visit to another of the Clubs Lord Milner asked one of the men:—

"Are you comfortable here?"

To which came the answer, with emphasis, "The man who says he isn't....well, that man isn't alive."

The Duke and Duchess of Devonshire, Lady Maud Cavendish, Sir Robert Borden, Prime Minister of Canada, Sir William Hearst, then Premier of Ontario, the Hon. W. M. Martin, Premier of Saskatchewan, Sir George Perley, High Commissioner for Canada, Sir Edward Kemp, Overseas Minister, Lieut-Gen. Sir R. E. W. Turner, Hon. Sir George E. Foster, Major-Gen. Sir Francis Lloyd, then Commanding the London District, Hon. Philippe Roy, Canadian Commissioner in Paris, Sir Charles Hanson, then Lord Mayor of London, Lieut.-Col. Noel Marshal, Chairman Executive Canadian Red Cross, Mr. R. B. Angus of Montreal, Dr. James Robertson, C.M.G., Mr. W. H. Gardner of Winnipeg, and Mr. J. W. Dafoe of Winnipeg, were among the many who went to see the Clubs and to shake hands with the men.

If any reward were needed by those who provided these Clubs and those who served them, they have it in the gratitude of the men—and of the mothers.



American soldiers at the Hut. At a time when few Canadian troops were using the Hut accommodation was reserved at the special request of the War Office for one thousand American soldiers, from Thursday the 16th until Saturday the 19th of July, for the Peace celebrations. Even under these circumstances room was kept for such Canadians as might visit the Hut.

This little story may well end with quotations from two letters.

From a Mother -

"Thank you and the Committee of the Maple Leaf Club for Canadian soldiers. Words cannot express the inestimable benefit it has been to my youngest son. His letter written just after Christmas on return to camp, gave such a glowing account of the kindness and hospitality he received at the Maple Leaf Club, which helped him to enjoy his Christmas. My boy is only 23 and young enough to be very lonesome, and I feel as if I must write and express my gratitude for the kind welcome he received.

From a gallant soldier whose name appeared soon after in the Roll of Honour

" Some people have no idea of what a vital part this sort of thing plays in the *moral* of an army. Very few people seem to say it, and so I hope you will pardon me for being one of the people who cannot help saying what all we men feel every day out in the firing line, and when we come home wounded. I have often heard the sentiment expressed by men and officers alike out there, that the game would hardly be within the compass of a man's endurance for any length of time if it were not for the encouragement and devotion of the people at home.

Surely a high reward for those who kept faith with the men who offered themselves lest "Freedom fall."



1.1.1. *Introduction*

The Committee tried to dissuade me. This photograph was taken at the meeting of the Committee for the prevention of the front row are Mr. Garrison, Mr. H. C. Mrs. R. C. and Mr. H. C. Garrison and Mrs. H. C. Bowey. In the back row are Mr. E. C. D. S. Mr. John K. Mr. A. L. Numis Mr. Peacock, Robert H. S. and Dr. R. M. Adams. C. M. G. D. S. Agent of the War Office.

The Oversea Forces Reception Committee.

Early in the history of the Clubs for Overseas men the question of transport, *i.e.* their conveyance from the stations on arrival, to the various Clubs, demanded serious attention. The trains came in at all hours of the day and night, weary men arrived often at four in the morning with no idea of how to reach an address given to them in France, and the great city, as a precaution against air-raids, was shrouded for the most part in blackest darkness. Members of that valuable organisation the "National Guard," and the Metropolitan Police, did their best to direct soldiers but it was not possible for them to see the men safely from station to Club, or from one station to another.

A small group of Canadians, headed by Sir William Stavert, made an attempt to grapple with the problem. The members of this group were Messrs. W. O. Ryde, David Rogers, Arthur Rimmon, Robert Loring and Captain Howard Coulthard. But a larger scheme, one which was to prove a godsend to hundreds of thousands of soldiers, was in view, and a splendid organisation gradually developed. Sir Arthur Steel Maitland, then Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, and Sir Everard im Thurn, on behalf of the Joint Committee of the Overseas Club, began by approaching Sir Henry Imbert-Terry, who had some experience in organisation, and with his assistance the Oversea Forces Reception Committee was formed. This Committee, of which Sir Arthur Steel Maitland was President, Sir Henry Imbert-Terry, Bart., Chairman, and Mr. W. H. Cannell and Mr. A. T. Rivers, Organising Officers, consisted of about seventy business men, and twenty N.C.O.'s and orderlies, detailed for this duty by the Canadian Military Authorities.

A simple badge was worn, consisting of a blue armlet with the words "Overseas Forces" inscribed on it in yellow letters. This badge became a familiar and a friendly sight to all Overseas troops, for in addition to the 878,498 Canadians met and guided, the Committee dealt with 45,000 South Africans, and 105,000 Australians, New Zealanders, Newfoundlanders, South Sea Islanders, men from the West Indies and Americans. It also met and attended to the wants of convalescent soldiers, and gave help to individual men visiting London.

Obviously the transport of the men was an important part of the work, and for this purpose a service of motor vehicles was arranged, the cost of which was borne by the various Clubs. Reference may be made to a sum of £475 (S2,200) which was raised for the transport fund by a Matinee on

March 31st, 1916, at the Lyric Theatre, London, when the play "Beauchamp and Beecham," by the Canadian writer, Mrs. Everard Cotes (Sara Jeannette Duncan) was presented by her as her gift to her countrymen.

An informal gathering, in honour of the Oversea Forces Reception Committee, was held at the Maple Leaf Hut in March 1919, when Lady Drummond presented souvenir badges to the seventy members. The "charm" which was in the form of a Maple Leaf set in gold, bore the inscription on the back:

For Voluntary War Services rendered to 1,000,000 Oversea Troops, 1915-1919

**Outstanding Facts in the Story
of the Maple Leaf Clubs. 1915-1919.**

Total number of beds occupied	595,73
Total number of meals served	1,052,891
Total value of cheques cashed for men	£1,818,971. \$8,741. 27. 29
Total amount of money deposited at Clubs by men	£591,821. \$2,730. 445)
Total number of buildings occupied	14 houses and 2 huts
Total number of Canadians met by Oversea Forces Reception Committee	\$75,408

APPENDIX.

HONORARY PATRON

FIELD-MARSHAL H.R.H. THE DUKE OF CONNAUGHT, K.G., K.T.
K.P., ETC., ETC.

PATRONS

THE VISCOUNT MILNER, P.C.
RUDYARD KIPLING, Esq., LL.D
THE HON. SIR GEORGE H. PERLEY, K.C.M.G.
THE HON. SIR SIDNEY GREVILLE, C.B.
LORD SHAUGHNESSY, K.C.V.O.
H. R. DRUMMOND, Esq.
COL. CHARLES A. HOPKINS, C.M.G.
MAJOR GENERAL CARSON, C.B.
MAJOR GENERAL J. O. MACDOUGALL, C.M.G.
THE HON. SIR W. H. HAMILTON, K.C.M.G.
ANGUS SINCLAIR, Esq.
THE MARCHIONESS OF SALISBURY
THE BARONESS STRATHCONA
THE HON. MRS. RONALD GREVILLE
THE HON. MRS. J. R. MAGUIRE
MISS ALEXIA F. SCOTT
MISS MARY K. T. SCOTT
MRS. ALBERT E. GOODERHAM, representing I.O.D.I.

The following Patrons died during the period of the Club's activities

THE RT. HON. EARL GREY, P.C.
COL. O. A. G. FITZGERALD, C.M.G.
LIEUT-COL. RICHARD REID, Agent-General for Ontario.

COMMITTEE

LADY DRUMMOND, President
THE HON. MRS. RONALD GREVILLE, First Vice-President
LADY PERLEY, Second Vice-President
PERCEVAL F. RIDOUT, Esq., Hon. Secretary
A. L. NUNNS, Esq., Hon. Treasurer
MRS. H. T. PLAYFAIR
MISS DEAVON
MRS. A. M. GOSSAGE
MRS. HEWINS
JOHN KEMP, Esq.
MRS. RUDYARD KIPLING
ROBERT LINDSAY, Esq.
THE LADY MANNERS
THE COUNTESS OF MINTO
THE HON. MRS. GRAHAM MURRAY
W. O. RYDE, Esq.
BRIGADIER-GENERAL R. MANLEY SIMS, C.M.G., D.S.O.
LADY TURNER.

FORMER MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE.

TRIVERS ALLAN, Esq.,	resigned 15th May, 1917.
CAPTAIN ARTHUR,	resigned 2nd Nov. 1917.
MRS. LAWRENCE DRUMMOND,	resigned 19th Feb., 1918.
MRS. ELLISSEN,	resigned 5th Feb., 1918.
ROBERT GRANT, Esq., Jr.,	resigned 4th Apr., 1916.
ROBERT LORING, Esq.,	resigned 7th Nov., 1916.
MRS. A. E. SHAW,	resigned 28th Sept., 1915.
G. G. STUART, Esq.,	resigned 17th Aug. 1915.
MISS MERIEL TALBOT,	resigned 18th Jan. 1916.
CAPTAIN WATSON.	resigned 19th Nov. 1918.

MATRONS

MISS ALICE M. TIMMIS, of Pedmore, near Stourbridge, Matron at Charles Street, from time of opening until closing.

MISS MARGARET M. SADLER, of Warwick, Matron at Grosvenor Gardens, from time of opening until closing.

MISS FLORENCE E. ROTHWELL, at Connaught Place, W.

The late MISS CHARLOTTE MORGAN, of Weston-Super-Mare, at Grosvenor Gardens.

MRS. A. E. SHAW, of Calgary, at Connaught Place.

MRS. J. W. WATTS, of Montreal, at Connaught Place.

MRS. R. A. KENNEDY, of Ottawa, at Connaught Place.

MISS GRANT (Asst. Matron), at Connaught Place.

MRS. MILNE, of Montreal, at 57, Eaton Place.

MRS. GEORGE STACEY, of Edmonton, at 57, Eaton Place.

MRS. F. C. SIMS, of Edmonton, at Elizabeth Street.

MRS. H. G. MONGER, of Moosejaw, at Elizabeth Street.

MISS RACHEL STERRY, of Bridgewater, at Elizabeth Street.

MRS. (MARJORIE) FIELD, in charge of Grosvenor Gardens Hut.

COMPTROLLERS.

The late G. G. STUART, Esq., K.C., of Quebec.

CAPTAIN ARTHUR, D.S.O., 10th Battalion, C.E.F.

CAPTAIN W. F. WATSON, of Edmonton, Div. Cav., 1st Can. Div.

GENERAL MANAGER.

LIEUT.-COLONEL F. A. H. ELIOTT, D.S.O., late South African Permanent Force.

Among others who have rendered valuable services to the Maple Leaf Clubs, are MAJOR GEORGE STACEY, of Edmonton, CAPTAIN J. ROUND, of Vancouver, B.C., CAPTAIN H. G. MONGER, of Moosejaw, CAPTAIN J. C. MCQUARRIE, 49th Battalion, 3rd Canadian Division, attached 1st Canadian Division, CAPTAIN J. W. WATTS, 73rd Battalion, C.E.F., CAPTAIN McKECHNIE, of Montreal, LIEUT. R. B. HOWELL, Strathcona's Horse, CAPTAIN F. C. SIMS, of Edmonton, 1st Battalion, 1st Canadian Division, LIEUT. A. R. JONES, 1st C.M.R., 3rd Division, C. C. OSBORNE, Esq., of London.

Also MISS RIBOT, of Jersey, Channel Islands, MRS. HARDING, of London, MISS WORRALL, Channel Islands, Miss PEARL MACDONALD, of Toronto,

MISS NANCY HASTINGS, of Eccles, Cheshire, MRS. S. J. BOURNE, of Taplow, Bucks, MISS GERTRUDE ROBERTSON, of Acklington, Northumberland, MISS PATTY JACKSON, of Alnwick, Northumberland, MISS FRASER, MRS. GILBERT SLATER, of Clent, near Stourbridge, MISS JESSIE SAUNDERS, of Battersea Park, London, MISS D. SADLER, MISS V. SADLER, MISS STERRY, of Bridgewater, and MRS. F. A. H. ELIOTT.

The thanks of the Committee are also due to MR. W. FISHER, who acted for a period as Honorary Legal Adviser to the Club, and was succeeded by MR. JOHN KEMP; to DR. GOSSAGE, Hon. Consulting Physician, DR. SYLVESTER WILLARD and DR. CHARLES MORRIS, Honorary Physicians; to MR. HERBERT W. ALIOTT, Auditor; to MESSRS. PARKER, GARRETT AND COMPANY, Solicitors; and to MAJOR CHARLES SKIPPER, Advisory Architect.

Also to MR. W. F. BENSON, of the Bank of Montreal and to MR. S. L. JONES, of the Dominion Bank, who acted as Auditors for short periods

Page Thirty-two

Produced by
CARLTON
PRINTERS
London

